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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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M. W. W. W. W.

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

FEB 14 '79

Issue #36
May 14, 1976

INTERNAL SECURITY PROGRAM OFF TO GOOD START.....Great majority of employees are cooperating in the security program. Remember that a property pass is required when government property is removed from any USDA building. Entry procedures have been tightened. Beginning May 11, an employee without valid USDA identification must be identified and be signed in by an official of his Agency. (Contact: L.L. Free, OI, ext 76915)

USDA PROGRESS IN REDUCING PUBLIC REPORTING BURDEN.....USDA is continuing efforts to comply with President Ford's request for a 10 percent reduction in the number of public-use reports by June 30, 1976. The reduction will be measured against the October 31, 1975 inventory of OMB approved public-use reports. After achieving the June 30 reduction, agencies should plan to follow the OMB revised Circular A-40 and special guidelines to further reduce the public's reporting burden. On October 31, 1975, agencies had 849 public-use reports, which by March 31 had been reduced to 801, and on April 30 to 799. The reduction of 50 public-use reports through April 30 is due almost entirely to the separately conducted campaign to reduce forms and reporting within the Department, which also resulted in elimination of these public-use reports. Achievement of a 10 percent reduction by June 30 will require the participation of all agencies and will occur in two ways. First, as agencies request OMB clearance for extending their public-use forms, they will generally be giving up some public-use reporting activity. Secondly, agencies which have not achieved a 10 percent reduction, will be evaluating their programs to identify and discontinue public reporting systems with the lowest priorities. (Contact: Richard P. Small, SRS, ext. 76201)

FCCC COMPUTER UPGRADE.....USDA signed a contract with UNIVAC on April 30 to install a UNIVAC 1100/42 at FCCC as an interim upgrade pending competitive procurement. System delivery is scheduled for September 1, 1976. Negotiations resulted in a Government cost avoidance of \$462,577 as compared to the vendor's original proposal. (Contact: H. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

TELEPHONES - 447 NUMBERS AND 5-DIGIT DIALING.....The C&P Telephone Company has agreed to preserve the 5-digit dialing capability within the USDA Complex until the current CENTREX system is replaced by the proposed METREX. If adopted, the METREX system is at least two years away. Only 447 numbers will be assigned within the Complex and all 472 numbers recently assigned will be replaced. This agreement is based on USDA's need for telephone lines remaining relatively constant. Note it is even more important that excess telephone instruments and lines be identified and eliminated. (Contact: Bill Roth, OO, ext. 75225)

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LEGISLATIVE ITEMS OF INTEREST.....

- ... Study Commission on Federal Grants Proposed. Senator Chiles introduced S. 3359 on May 3. That bill would create a Commission on Federal Aid Reform to study the processes which are now providing over \$60 billion yearly in Federal assistance and grants to State and local governments, colleges, nonprofit groups and others. This proposal follows the American Bar Association recommendation for an independent grants commission study included in their testimony on S. 1437 (A bill to distinguish Federal procurement from Federal grants and cooperative agreements). (Contact: Don Manns, OO, ext. 77527)
- ... First Concurrent Resolution on FY 1977 Budget Passed by Congress on May 13. Based on various reports and assumptions total USDA outlays could increase from \$10.7 billion in the Budget to \$13.6 billion.
- ... Upgrading USDA Positions. On May 6, a subcommittee of the Committee on Agriculture approved for full Committee action H.R. 10133, amended, which would: (1) upgrade the Under Secretary to Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; (2) raise position of Director Agricultural Economics, Executive Level V to Assistant Secretary of Agricultural Economics, Executive Level IV; (3) raise the positions of Administrators, APHIS and FNS, from GS-18 to Executive Level V; and (4) increase membership of the Board of the Commodity Credit Corporation from 6 to 7. (Contact: John Mottershead, OMF, ext. 74654)
- ... Conferee Report on Second Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1976 issued on May 13. USDA totals are as follows:

Amount Requested	House Bill Bill	Senate Bill	Conference Report
\$380,935,000	\$414,945,000	\$440,444,000	\$438,444,000

- ... Young Adult Conservation Corps. The House Committee on Education and Labor, on May 6, 1976, voted to report (but did not actually report) H.R. 10138, the Young Adult Conservation Corps Act. \$50 million for this program is included in the Congressional Budget Concurrent Resolution. (Contact: John Mottershead, OMF, ext. 74654)

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS BETWEEN AGENCY AND STAFF OFFICE PERSONNEL AT MAY 5-7 MANAGEMENT COUNCIL CONFERENCE SHOWED WILLINGNESS TO WORK TOGETHER AND TO PURSUE SOLUTIONS TO MUTUAL PROBLEMS..... Departmental staff office management objective statements for coming year were discussed and critiqued. Resulting actions are:

TARGET DATE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
May 12	Completed decision matrix transmitted to Ass't Sec. for Admin.	Staff office Directors
May 19	Revised management objectives statements reflecting agency suggestions made at conference transmitted to Ass't Sec. for Admin.	Staff office Directors
May 26	Revised objectives package available for Council members	Ass't Sec. for Admin.

USDA EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN SAVINGS BOND CAMPAIGN STILL SHORT OF GOAL TO REMAIN ON INTERDEPARTMENTAL HONOR ROLL - BY 1.8%.....Although the current USDA Savings Bonds Campaign officially closed April 30, all actions currently in the pipeline will continue to be reported to Treasury until the end of May. Reports received as of May 7 show 2,353 employees have signed up since the campaign began and 1,787 employees have increased their allotments. The annual value of these bonds sales exceeds \$1.1 million. USDA's rate of participation is now 73.2 percent. Remember that you can still sign up for savings bonds and help our country. Also, you may elect to have your savings bond deductions start at a later date. See your bond representative. (Contact: George E. Bickerton, APHIS, ext. 68051)

STORAGE CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN.....Preliminary reports show that agencies are attacking the storage clean-up campaign aggressively. As an example, EMSC has released 4,800 square feet of storage space excess to their needs. This represents \$23,376 savings in rent charges. (Contact: Al Cauley, 00, ext. 72815)

TELECOMMUNICATIONS STUDY RFP.....ADS announcement of a Department-wide telecommunications study RFP was scheduled in the Commerce Business Daily on May 11. (Contact: H. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

SERVICE CENTERS PROGRESS.....A total of 1100 locations have been designated to be Agricultural Service Centers. Three hundred of these locations are now operational (with shared facilities, such as common telephone systems, space and equipment, and provision for sharing personnel assistance). The State Administrative Committees report that 300 more will be operational within the next month. A total of 700 service centers should be operational by JULY 1. (Contact: Dick Hadsell, 00, ext. 73152)

OMB SPRING CALL FOR A-11 SUBMISSION.....Letters to each Agency providing guidance for submission of the Spring A-11 transmitted on May 12. (Contact: H. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

OVERWHELMING USDA RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSTITUTE (DODCI) ADP SECURITY COURSE HAS RESULTED IN SCHEDULING PROBLEM.....ADS will notify council members when firm dates for ADP security courses are received from DODCI - probably can be scheduled for late summer or early fall. Refer to March 9 ADS announcement for details about the two courses. (Contact: H. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

SUCCESSFUL TRAINING CONFERENCE CONDUCTED.....USDA representatives serving on 19 Minority Business Opportunity Committees (MBOC) in various cities throughout the U.S. were brought to Washington on April 28, 1976, to become knowledgeable of USDA procurement opportunities and those USDA programs that have potential for impact on the local minority business community. MBOCs provide the local coordinating and delivery mechanisms for Federal minority enterprise assistance programs. The participants left the conference able to identify and coordinate USDA resources to assist minority business at the local level. (Contact: J. Fred King, OEO, ext. 77117)

DID YOU KNOW THAT CSRS.....

- ... oversees for Congress and the Department the spending of over \$114,000,000 in agricultural and forestry research this year.
- ... recently helped observe the Centennial of the establishment of the first State agricultural experiment station at New Haven, Conn., in 1875.
- ... is USDA's principal contact with 83 state institutions carrying out almost \$450 million of research, or almost 70% of all publicly supported agricultural and forestry research in the U.S.
- ... cooperates with ARS and FS research on budget development and program coordination where appropriate.
- ... recently announced the support of 71 research projects through a competitive grant program for vital research amounting to almost \$7 million.
- ... oversees funds under the Hatch Act as amended in 1955 to the State agricultural experiment stations (SAES); the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Act (P.L. 87-788) to SAES and other cooperating state institutions; P.L. 89-106 authorizing special grants to support research in line with Departmental objectives and to support research in the 1890 land-grant universities and Tuskegee Institute; and the Rural Development Act of 1972 funded equally between research and extension for work in the states.
- ... Plays an important role in joint regional-National research planning.
- ... conducts subject-matter reviews at cooperating institutions to review research progress especially on federally funded projects.
- ... conducts many special on-site reviews at the request of the research units of the state institutions it helps fund. These reviews focus on where the research unit should be going with its programs, what the most important research areas of the next 5 to 10 years will be, and how the research unit involved can adjust its current programs in those directions.
- ... is responsible for CRIS--the Current Research Information System through which the research project information on over 24,000 active research projects of over 10,000 agricultural and forestry scientists in USDA and cooperating state institutions is collected, stored, and made retrievable for the benefit of scientists and of research administrators. Through CRIS, these groups can keep current on research in progress, research emphases and gaps, research fund and personnel allocations, and what research is going on in a scientific area or on a specific commodity.
- ... serves as a catalyst, stimulator, facilitator for conferences, workshops, and task forces related to research and research administration; and represents State research programs in Departmental and interdepartmental activities.
- ... is cooperating with the Research Coordinators and Presidents of the sixteen 1890 land-grant universities and Tuskegee on a special Bicentennial Symposium honoring these predominantly black institutions and their agricultural researchers for their research contributions over the years. The Symposium will be held in Washington, D.C., Nov. 11-13, 1976. A special medallion commemorating the event also will be struck.
- ... is involved in helping with scientist and research information exchanges with a number of countries with which the U.S. has bilateral agreements--among them, Russia, Poland, and Spain.